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March, 1869, exposed the hoax and disclosed the author of it in the *Historical Magazine*. Equal faith is reposed in the mythical equestrian statue, erected on the summit of Corvo in the Madeira Islands, and the author inquires "Was the statue erected as a guide to point out to other northern sea-rovers and to Columbus the route to follow to the centre of the New World?" (II. 323).

There are some strange blunders in New England geography, such as "Kent county, Massachusetts," and "the city of Rutland, Massachusetts" (II. 313), and we are sceptical about "honey-dew," such as Leif gathered in abundance, being yet distilled in the island of Nantucket (II. 218); and that in the Black Death, A. D. 1347, "in the city of London only fourteen persons survived" (II. 414).

We will conclude with one other erroneous statement: "Claudian, a poet, tells, in the year 390, that the Emperor Theodosius had frightened the far distant isle (Thule) with the sound of his Getish wars" (II. 520). The truth is that Theodosius, the great general (father of the emperor of the same name), A. D. 370, repelled the attacks of the Picts and the Scots upon Britain, and it is this to which Claudian refers.

In view of the flood of light our author has shed upon the ancient history of this continent, we look forward with much interest to his forthcoming work, in which he intends to "prove that Alexander VI. was too great and disinterested a character to be thrown among his Italian officials and not become aspersed by their reviving paganism" (II. 464, note).

H. W. H.

*The Transit of Civilization from England to America in the Seventeenth Century.* By EDWARD EGGLESTON, Author of *The Beginners of a Nation*. (New York: D. Appleton and Company. 1901. Pp. x, 344.)

THE full title of Dr. Eggleston's book is hardly lucid; the abridged form of it which appears on the cover—"The Transit of Civilization"—is obscure; and only the reverse of the leaf which precedes the title-page informs us that the work forms part of his "History of Life in the United States." Carping though critical mention of such details may seem, these details are the first which come to mind when one considers the total effect of the book in question. The indefiniteness of the titles proves unfortunately characteristic of the chapters which they name. As a whole, for all their interesting passages, these are confused, bewildering and sometimes misleading.

Yet Dr. Eggleston's subject is not only interesting but important. His purpose was to set forth the precise state of European civilization at the time when our country was finally settled, to explain the mental and moral condition of the generation which implanted itself in American soil, and in some degree to point out how the pristine ideas and ideals, convictions and errors, of our national ancestry have affected our national

growth and character. In setting about this work he found that "there was little help in anything American" and that he "could not count on anything English;" that he must "build a description from the ground. The complex states of knowing and thinking, of feeling and passion, must be explained. The little world as seen by the man of the seventeenth century must be understood. Its sun, moon, and planets were flames of fire without gravity, revolved about the earth by countless angels; its God governed this one little world with mock majesty." And so his preface goes on, pleasantly and not very clearly, to tell how the range and diligence of his reading extended. The fact of his conscientious research is further attested, if attestation were needed, by copious marginal references, which make his pages frequently remind one of a folio Burton, and by the numerous and closely printed supplementary notes—"Elucidations" he prefers to name them—which follow each of his six chapters. Whatever Dr. Eggleston's limits, nobody can charge him with lack of industry.

If occasional and random tests can prove anything, furthermore, these references and notes are thoroughly trustworthy. When Dr. Eggleston gives you chapter and verse, and he gives them freely, you may thankfully and confidently accept his authority. And yet the final result of all this labor, which one would be so glad to praise without reserve, suggests rather than commendation a word of warning to all modern students and writers of history. It is an agreeable incidental reflection that such warning to men still young can be based on work which comes from a man so far from young in years; nothing could more surely imply that fresh youthfulness of spirit which groups Dr. Eggleston with some of our elder men of letters, whose natures to the end rose above the impediments both of time and of infirmity. Assuming for the moment, then,—what anybody, if such body there be, who did not know Dr. Eggleston's name would instantly assume,—that this book may be held a fair example of contemporary writing, one cannot point out too clearly that human minds, like human stomachs, vary indefinitely in their power of digestion. Each man's limit of acquisition each man must learn for himself; but no man who desires to produce anything more individual than a compilation can afford to take into his head at any given time more information than he can handle with vigorous intellectual energy. The analogy of physical indigestion is variously close; at sympathetic moments the mental state of modern students, turned loose to browse amid all the riches of modern libraries, seems painfully like the plethoric inconveniences which disturb healthy boys toward the end of Thanksgiving dinners.

To be more precise, the work which Dr. Eggleston undertook demanded not only such wide research as he has courageously persisted in, but also at least two supplementary processes. Which of the two is the more important need hardly be determined; both are essential. In the first place, the historian of a past civilization must somehow bring himself into imaginative sympathy with the human spirit of the times

with which he deals, until he understands not only bare facts but also how those facts made the living men feel who knew them in the flesh. In the second place, such an historian, availing himself of the perspective of time, must slowly grow to perceive the mutual relations of his facts not only to one another but also to so much of general history as comes within his vision. To take a casual example from our own times, a writer of three hundred years hence who should touch on the dancing of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries might draw surprising inferences, or leave such inferences to be drawn, from an accurate description of the waltz as the fashionable successor of the minuet. And no amount of detailed erudition, uncorrected by imaginative sympathy, and by general knowledge of social development, could easily avoid the conclusion that our own times have been deplorably less respectable than those of our great-grandparents,—which is far from what most of us believe to be the case.

How remote Dr. Eggleston is from imaginative sympathy with the past which he tries to revive may be inferred from that phrase of his preface which tells how the God of the seventeenth century “governed this one little world with mock majesty.” Perhaps so; anthropomorphism is doubtless out of credence as well as out of fashion. But the God of our emigrant fathers was the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the God of the Psalmists and the Prophets; the God of the four Gospels which for ages were accepted as His living Word; the God of the Crusades and of the Reformation; the God to whose throne Foxe’s Martyrs rose ecstatic from the flames of Smithfield; the God whose Spirit sustained amid all the horrors of a savage wilderness the indomitable courage of the Pilgrims and of the Puritans; the God to whose service Cromwell gave himself; the God for whom the Ironside soldiery laid down their lives. They had their errors,—saints, apostles, prophets, martyrs, and the rest; but their widest error seems less than that of a modern historian who finds in the majesty of their Divinity even a tinge of mockery. Only those who can thrill with devout fervor as the words of the elder centuries begin to glow again with the life which once was in them can understand the spiritual truth wherein their formal misconceptions fade at last, like misty clouds in the fathomless blue of sunny skies.

Just such misleading lack of sympathy as that “mock majesty” seems to imply appears throughout Dr. Eggleston’s six chapters. The titles of these chapters incidentally indicate his second great fault—confused perception of the relations which the separate parts of his subject bear to one another. Here then are titles in turn: I. “Mental Outfit of the Early Colonists;” II. “Digression Concerning Medical Notions at the Period of Settlement”—though why this is any more digressive than the chapters which follow is not evident; III. “Mother English, Folk-Speech, Folk-Lore, and Literature;” IV. “Weights and Measures of Conduct;” V. “The Tradition of Education;” VI. “Land and Labor in the Early Colonies.” Again it may seem unfair to base criticism on

a mere table of contents ; this table, however, in its apparent lack of system—for the thread which binds it together, if there be one, is not evident, even to a careful reader,—really typifies the confusion of the whole book. The faint yet pervasive use of metaphor, too, freshly obscures meaning. So in the end it is not suprising that one lays down the *Transit of Civilization* with some misty impressions which very likely Dr. Eggleston never meant to make. To take at random a single one of these, he can hardly have intended to inform readers unlearned in the law that an ordinary method of conveying real property in old New England was unsupported livery of seisin. His researches must have brought him in sight, for example, of such things as the published volumes of Suffolk Deeds, and Thomas Lechford's Note-Book. To take another of these impressions, he can hardly have intended, at a time when state universities still maintain alternative schools of homoeopathic medicine, and educated people flock to seminaries of Christian Science, that we should serenely smile at the medical superstition of three centuries ago, as if all such superstition were dead and gone. And he must know that even to this day a knowledge of Latin proves, no one can tell why, the soundest basis for mental training. And so on. His confusion might seriously mislead.

But this is more than enough of fault-finding. Though the *Transit of Civilization* had deeper faults still, it would remain a book worth reading. As a collection of out-of-the-way and curious memoranda, suggesting all manner of discursive speculation, it has a quality and a charm which queerly group it in memory with Aubrey's *Miscellanies*, and Burton's *Anatomy*, and whatever other treasuries of oddity one may be fond of. It has over these, too, the advantage that its own references to authority may always be trusted and will often prove illuminating. Last and best of all, it really points the way to a kind of American history which in time may flood our past with revivifying light. For we shall never fully know ourselves until some imaginative, sympathetic historian, mature in power and reflection, shall have shown us, in semblance of its old vitality, what was the true mental and moral condition of our emigrant fathers, in their habit as they lived.

BARRETT WENDELL.

*The Expansion of the American People, Social and Territorial.* By EDWIN ERLE SPARKS, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of American History, The University of Chicago. (Chicago : Scott, Foresman and Co. 1900. Pp. 461.)

EVER since the north temperate coast of the western hemisphere began to be occupied by European settlers, population and civilization have been spreading westward. So important has this westward movement been, and so much more marked than the movement in any other direction, that it is a common-place observation. All that was ever needed to prove its existence was to state the relevant facts clearly ; and it does not